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# Rituals of Solitude

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# RITUAL OF SOLITUDE

Senta Cunningham, Alumna  
English

I light a candle in the dark,  
the thick sweetness of caramel  
swirls on tendrils of smoke.  
A cast of shadows splash  
the white walls, dancing  
to the whim of the flame  
and a psychedelic beat.  
They stretch their black bodies  
to the ceiling, reaching  
their arms towards the sky.  
Embracing, pulsing, swaying  
in celebration, they bear witness  
to my solitary meditation.  
After the ritual of a solitary night,  
when the music's over,  
the flame extinguished  
and the dancers bid farewell,  
I drift off to dance through  
a wild garden of my own design.

